GRAF et al 5
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of enabling multimedia information to pass between a first network based on a first technology and a second network based on a second technology, the method including ~~the step of:~~ enabling the first ~~and / or~~and/or second networks to apply a method of inband capability negotiation or signaling including logically mapping multimedia capabilities information to in band messages carried in a channel of an intermediate fixed or circuit switched network in order to establish ~~the~~ a format for the passing of the multimedia information from the first network to the second network.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inband messages are TFO (Tandem Free Operation) messages.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the capability negotiation includes negotiation of protocol.

4. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the multimedia information is further passed from the second network to a third network based on the first technology or a third technology, and in which the step of applying inband capability is effected to the multimedia information passing from the second to the third network.

5. (Previously Presented) A method as claims in claim 1, wherein the multimedia information is user plane information, such as compressed audio stream.

6. (Currently Amended) A communication system ~~having~~comprising:

a first network based on a first technology,

a second network based on a second technology, and

interface means enabling the first and second networks to apply an in band methodology including logically mapping multimedia capabilities information to in band messages carried on a channel of an intermediate fixed or circuit switched network in order to signal ~~and / or~~and/or negotiate the passing of multimedia information from the first network to the second network.

7. (Original) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the in band messages are TFO (Tandem Free Operation) messages.

8. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, further including a third network based on the first technology or a third technology, and interface means applying TFO to the multimedia information transferred from the second to the third network.

9. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the third network is one of a PLMN or a multimedia network.

10. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the second network includes a plurality of telecommunication networks.

11. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, in which the multimedia information is user plane information, such as a compressed audio stream.

12. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the first network is a multimedia network.

13. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the second network is a SS7 based network.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for exchanging capabilities information between a first node in a first multimedia network and a second node in a second multimedia network, said first and second multimedia networks being separated by a fixed or circuit switched telecommunications transit network across which capabilities information between said first and second nodes is transported, the method ~~including the steps of~~comprising:

transmitting from said first multimedia network to said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network a control message containing capabilities information intended to govern the operation of said second node,

at ~~the~~ an interface between said first multimedia network and said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network, mapping said capabilities information into an inband signalling message for transport in a bearer channel within said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network, and

at ~~the~~ an interface between said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network and said second multimedia network, removing said capabilities information from within said inband signalling message for transmission to said second node.

15. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network is based on SS7.

16. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network is based on call control not being tied to underlying user plane transport, such as a Bearer Independent Call Control (BICC) network.

17. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 15 wherein the inband signalling message conforms to the GSM Tandem Free Operation (TFO) inband signalling protocol.

18. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 17 wherein the inband signalling message is a TFO Message.

19. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the capabilities information includes information characterizing the capabilities of one or more of said nodes to transmit or receive information streams.

20. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the operation of at least one of said first and second multimedia networks is based on ITU-T Recommendation H.323.

21. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the operation of at least one of said first and second multimedia networks is based on the IETF RFC 2543 Session Initiation Protocol.

22. (Currently Amended) A system for exchanging capabilities information between a first node in a first multimedia network and a second node in a second multimedia network, said first and second multimedia networks being separated by a fixed or circuit switched telecommunications transit network across which capabilities information between said first and second nodes is transported, the system ~~including~~comprising:

means for transmitting a control message containing capabilities information, intended to govern the operation of said second node, from said first multimedia network to said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network,

means for mapping said capabilities information, at an interface between said first multimedia network and said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network, into an inband signalling message for transport in a bearer channel within said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network, and

means for removing said capabilities information, at the interface between said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network and said second multimedia network, from within said inband signalling message for transmission to said second node.

23. (Currently Amended) A system as claimed in claim 22 wherein the capabilities information mapping and removing means is provided by one or more gateways, media gateways, rate adaptor units, or interworking units interconnecting said first and second multimedia networks to said fixed or circuit switched telecommunications network.

24. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the channel comprises one or more bits of PCM samples of one or more links of a PSTN/ISDN network.

25. (New) A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the channel comprises one or more bits of PCM samples of one or more links of a PSTN/ISDN network.

26. (New) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the bearer channel comprises one or more bits of PCM samples of one or more links of a PSTN/ISDN network.

27. (New) A system as claimed in claim 22, wherein the bearer channel comprises one or more bits of PCM samples of one or more links of a PSTN/ISDN network.